

Irrigation Ode.

Starving valley, and seedless plain,
Parched, and barren, and lusterless—
A dismal land for hope to wane
There in the burning quietness.
There where the music of the stream,
Amid the sedge, all wan and sere
Would seem the fancy of a dream—
Then came the steadfast pioneer.

II.

Only the bleak waste greeted him;
How high the courage, faith how great—
To stand upon the desert's rim
And dream that here might grow a state:
A prayer, then a thanksgiving song,
A consecration of the soil,
Then ceaseless work; O, God, how long,
And wasting was that thankless toil.

III.

The land was bound with silver skein,
And Ceres stooped to bless the sheaves;
Up sprang the fields of yellow grain,
A miracle unfolded leaves.
The ripple of the golden wheat,
Which stood in chrystal watered sod,
Was music heavenly and sweet,
When that first harvest smiled to God.

IV.

Just as the old Egyptians fought
The blazing sun along the Nile,
These latter men were not distraught,
They made a lotus laden isle
Of desert land; Persephone
Bestowed her poppies, and her corn,
And all the harvests strong and free,
That go to fill the plenty horn.

V.

Now blossoms load the bowing trees,
And back and forth, the singing wind
Flings leafy banners to the breeze,
And summer time is sweet and kind.
The crimson roses wave and blush
O'er all the earth incarnadine
In pink and red, they flaunt and flush
In life, and love, and hope divine.

VI.

A mighty captain wins a name,
And so does he who makes a home,
He's equal in the race for fame
Who plants a lily in the loam.
Production not Destruction gaunt—
The good you do for fellow man,
And poor is he who says "I can't,"
A laggard in the great God's plan.

VII.

Great empires crumble, pass away,
Man is a mite, a pinch of dust,
Gardens are all that live, and stay
To feed the nations, for they must,
Our song is one of golden soil,
The wheat is yellow, tall, and strong;
Ours is the dower of men that toil,
Our chant of praise, a harvest song.

—TOD GOODWIN.

"Pshaw! These matches are no good."
"Don't blame them; it is in the air. I've
known many a good match spoiled by a trip to
the seashore."—Town Topics.

BABY INCUBATORS.

Babies in incubators are one of the latest exhibits at Coney Island. They have made a big hit with the women. As a result, the trained animals, occupying quarters not far off, are getting jealous, and the wonderfully garbed Orientals, accustomed to a leading place among the human exhibits, look sulky.

To the great majority of people, incubator babies are a decided novelty. Every now and then one has been a star boarder at a New York hospital, but few, save the medical staff, knew anything about it. The babies live in strict seclusion.

At Coney Island it is quite different. Incubator babies at that resort may be gazed at by the public from morning till night for a consideration. Their visiting list is not restricted, letters of introduction are a needless formality, the way to their habitation is not hard to find.

In fact, it would be almost impossible for anyone but the blind to mistake the babies' quarters. Letters a foot long posted on the side of the building and over the front door leave no doubt as to its occupants, even though they do fail to furnish the information that the price of admission is a quarter—a high charge as sideshow prices go at Coney Island. But then babies always do come high.

As a consequence, in many cases, men, boys and girls who approach, dime in hand, turn in a hurry, pocket their money and stroll on to the fortune telling booth next door. With women, though, it is different. Almost without exception, they dive unflinchingly into wrist bags and fish out the excess sum—even though with doubts.

"Are they really live babies?" suspiciously asked a woman the other day, evidently scenting a joke of some sort.

"Certainly, ma'am," responded the ticket seller, "or your money back."

Somewhat reassured, the woman and a companion passed through the wicket and on into a cheerful room lined on three sides with glass incubators about two and one-half feet square, raised upon supports to rather more than the height of an ordinary bed.

There were about a dozen incubators in all, each fitted with what looked like a doll's bed. A somewhat narrow promenade in front of the incubators was marked off with a stout brass railing, which began at the entrance door and ended at a door opposite, through which visitors passed into another passage and thence into the street. The first two incubators only were empty. In every one of the others was a tiny white bundle tied around the middle with a blue or pink ribbon, to indicate respectively a boy or a girl.

At the first little waxen-looking image the women stopped and stared critically without paying the least attention to a man who was personally conducting a party of visitors around the room explaining as he went, after the manner of a tourists' guide.

"Do you believe," said one woman to the other, after a moment's steady survey, "that that is a real baby."

"I do not," was the calm reply, "Who ever saw a baby that color? If it is a real baby, it certainly is not alive."

Just then, something after the manner of the owl in the barber shop, the baby quivered one eyelid, as if trying to wink, yawned portentously and, as if deploring the lack of knowledge of some women, threw up two hands, each about the size of a nickel, toward his head.

The women gasped and fell backward against the brass railing. Then, without a word, they hurried along to hear what the guide was saying, which turned out to be an explanation of the various pipes and tubes that connected the incubators with the outside world.



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